

Friendship

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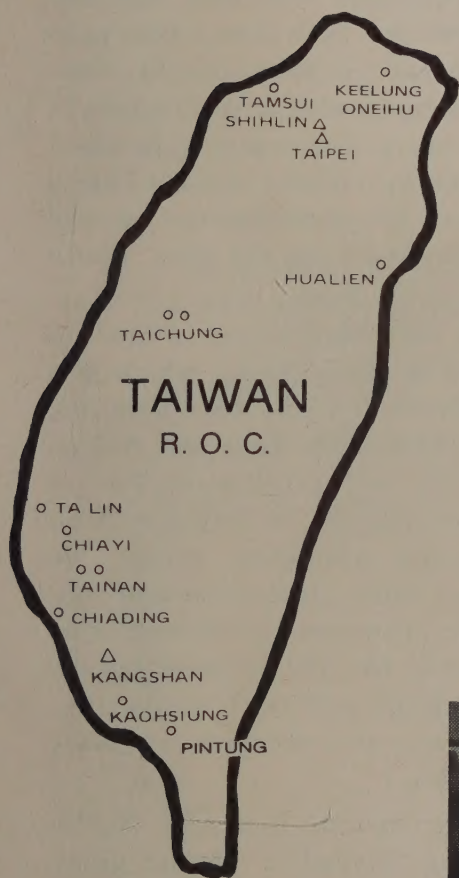


Photo Taker after Lenon Chang was ordained deacon

BISHOP'S LETTER

We send you our greetings during this special season and pray that you have a blessed year in the Grace of God.

Our current diocesan goal is to divide the diocese into two. May God help us transform the vision into a reality. This year we have translated and published three books- "What is Anglicanism?", "Why Choose the Episcopal Church?", and "What Makes Us Episcopalians?". We hope these books will help strengthen our people's identity as Anglicans. In the new year we are planning to publish books on evangelism in order to promote the Decade of Evangelism.

Grace and I attended the House of Bishops' Meeting in Portland, and also took the opportunity to visit our eldest daughter and her husband in Canada. We thoroughly enjoyed the beautiful scenery in Vancouver and Victoria. I felt very honored to meet the Rt. Rev. Michael Ingham, Bishop of New Westminster, while in Vancouver. I am very grateful to Bishop Ingham for hosting a wonderful lunch. I was also very pleased to attend the Mandarin service at St. Luke's there and was told that it was the first Mandarin service in the Church of Canada. I was impressed with the work of the Rev. Philip Der.

On Nov. 30, we were delighted and fortunate to be invited to attend the consecration of two new bishops in Hong Kong, which is a very meaningful as well as historical consecration. I felt very honored, along with Bishop Kwong of Hong Kong, and Bishop Ting and Bishop Wong of China, to consecrate Archdeacon Soo and Archdeacon Tsui as new bishops of Hong Kong. We were very excited to pay our first visit Macau, where we saw and learned many wonderful things. We were deeply touched by the Rev. Dr. Michael Pun's dedication and pastoral care. In the future, we will give more attention to students who study here in Taiwan. We are most grateful for the generosity and hospitality rendered to us by the bishops, clergy and staff of the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau. I pray that our two dioceses will have the opportunity to work more closely together.

I was very pleased to attend two consultations this year. NCCT-Church of Germany in May, and NCCCUSA in November. We are greatly encouraged by the attention and care from churches overseas. Through the sharing and fellowship, our mission perspective will be widened and reevaluated. In October, the Anglican Council of East Asia met in Singapore (once every four years). I was reelected Honorary Treasurer. In another election, I was elected to the Board of Directors of TungHai University (a Christian university in Taichung). It

is my great pleasure to be able to serve my alma matre.

"The Rite for Respecting Ancestors" which was accepted by the last Diocesan Synod has been well received overseas. The "Anglican World" published a special report on the matter. Clergy in the north gathered together every Friday morning at the Diocesan Center to work on translations from the Book of Common Prayer. At present we are preparing a new translation of the collects. Hopefully the translations will be completed soon. It will be a tribute to our 40th anniversary.

Through intense competition, new national legislators were elected on Dec. 2nd. The results are considered a three-way win, which reflects the upgraded quality democracy has achieved on Taiwan. The presidential elections to be held next March is the hot issue. It will produce the first directly elected president in the history of China and will reflect, for the first time, the democratic idea of "sovereignty of the people". The increased intensity between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits is regrettable as the fight is for life with dignity, freedom and democracy. I am an ardent believer in democracy and freedom. History has shown the tendency for these basic needs of human nature, and therefore we know they cannot be defeated.

Your prayers for us are most appreciated. I thank you and pray that you have a Blessed New Year.

In Peace,

The Right Rev. John C.T. Chien

Bishop of Taiwan

COMMUNIQUE OF THE TAIWAN-GERMAN CHURCH CONSULTATION

On May 9-10 the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Association of Protestant Churches and Missions in Germany, the Taiwan Presbyterian Church, and the NCCT sponsored a consultation at the Taipei YMCA. The Rev. Natanie-l Hsieh was the delegate for the Diocese of Taiwan and Bishop Chien presented two reports, "The Ecumenical Movement in Taiwan" and "The Relationship between the Taiwan Episcopal Church and Churches in Mainland China". The following is a report on the consultation.

The fall of the borders between East and West Germany on 9 November 1989 and the unification of both countries on 3 October 1990 brought an end to the suffering of a divided people. However, the problems of a 40-year-division came to the front. The churches have tried not only to overcome the difficulties of their own unification but also to contribute to the economic, political and especially social unification.

Fifty years after World War II, governments in Taiwan and China claim ownership of Taiwan. Over the years, this has caused oppression and betrayal of the hopes of the people. Also, especially the will and the rights of the Taiwan Indigenous people were totally ignored. The conflict between the ethnic groups of indigenous people, Hoklo, Hakka and immigrants from the mainland after 1945 has seriously influenced the society and church life.

Although, Taiwan in recent years has become economically affluent and politically more democratic, there is still a problem of its international status and national identity. The delegates of the consultation recognize the deep disappointment of the women in Taiwan not to be able, until now, to participate in the NGO Forum on Women in the 1995 United Nations World Women's Conference in Beijing, China.

We acknowledge the difference between the societies of Taiwan and Germany, but in Jesus Christ we share with each other the problems and challenges in our church life. In both countries, the rapid changes in society cause hardship to the powerless, elderly, women, youth, children, differently abled, refugees, migrant workers, and indigenous people. The churches are called to creative response, e.g. through family counselling, social services, educational projects and advocacy in their societies.

Out of the experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation for the German churches after the end of World War II, the German churches are committed to the ecumenical fellowship and mutual sharing of resources.

On the other hand, the role of the churches in Taiwan in the ecumenical community has had some difficulties due to the political uncertainties. The churches live also as a minority in a non-Christian society. In this difficult situation they have a special mission and opportunity. The churches in Taiwan come together in the National Council of Churches to promote friendly dialogue and social work with other religions, to encourage the churches in mutual communi-

cation and cooperation in mission and to bring the voice of the churches and the people in Taiwan into the international ecumenical community.

Both our churches are a part of the body of Christ and thereby part of the worldwide ecumenical movement. As part of the universal church, we live in a faith community of love and responsibility, respecting each other in our uniqueness coming out of our special local situation.

The churches in Taiwan and the churches in Germany have welcomed the China Christian Council into the community of the World Council of Churches.

The German churches support the churches in Taiwan to share God's love and grace with the churches in China and to have mutual respect for each other in striving to build the Kingdom of God. The German churches recognize and respect the churches in Taiwan in their human rights to pursue the dignity of Taiwan's people and to decide for themselves about their future.

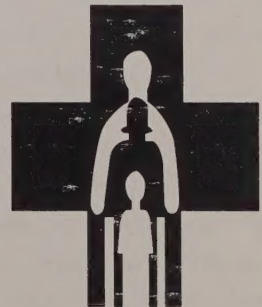
The churches in Taiwan recognize and respect that the German churches maintain and develop their partnership with the churches in Taiwan and the Churches in China.

We have enjoyed our encounter and mutual sharing, we have learnt from each other's experiences. We want to maintain our contacts and deepen our partnership.

As a means to obtain this goal, we think the following projects will be useful:

- exchange of information, evaluation of publication materials
- mutual visits on congregational and grassroots levels
- contacts between women and youth groups
- pastoral care for Taiwan Christians in Germany and German speaking Christians in Taiwan.

Having the experience of this consultation as an opportunity for dialogue, both delegations agreed that in due time there should be additional meetings for strengthening our relations and sharing mutual concerns in mission as members of the one body of Jesus Christ.





NCCT-NCCCUSA



Communique of the National Council of Churches of Taiwan and the
National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States

Mission Consultation in Taipei, Taiwan

October 31 - November 2

Mr. Herbert H.P. Ma the official delegate from the Diocese of Taiwan and the Rt. Rev. John Chien, were among the twenty-five representatives of the National Council of Churches in Taiwan (NCCT) and fifteen representatives of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCCUSA) met in Mission Consultation in Taipei, Taiwan on October 31-November 2. The theme was "Mission in Taiwan: Reflection and Envisioning".

Topics of discussion included descriptive reviews of the contemporary mission situations within the societies of Taiwan and the U.S., and surveys of developments within the churches represented at the consultation. Theological reflections upon the multi-cultural contexts for mission today in Taiwan and the USA were discussed and critiqued as well.

Before the beginning of the consultation, the US delegation was invited to participate in an exposure program, which included visits to programs addressing needs related to child prostitution and women's concerns, to indigenous people and migrant workers in Taiwan. We were deeply impressed by the commitment of Christians and churches in Taiwan to serve those in special need with both practical help and spiritual support.

It was helpful to receive reports describing major characteristics of the current mission context in Taiwan. We are aware of the fact that Taiwan is in a critical stage in its history and is in the process of democratization. We resonate with the people of Taiwan "longing for building up a community of common destiny with new life."

Deep concerns abound concerning the deteriorating ecological situation, in the face of rampant greed and the "get-rich" mentality of many in Taiwan today. As one presenter put it, "The worship of the 'golden calf' seems to take the place of the worship of Creator God."

Christians are a small minority within Taiwan, living and witnessing in the midst of indigenous folk religions, of Confucianism and Taoism, and of rapidly growing Buddhist movements.

U.S. participants noted that, while different in many ways, the contemporary American scene contains many of the same factors. Cultural, racial, and ethnic tensions also polarize US society. Secularism and religious fundamentalism are growing, and mainline churches no longer are able to play a decisive role in American public life. Like in Taiwan, US churches know what it is to experience vulnerability and pain, while also struggling to maintain vision for ecumenical renewal, along with new life for marginalized peoples in American society and far

beyond.

A keynote paper was presented on the theme "Christian Mission in the World of Religions and Cultures: A Theological Reorientation". It stimulated a rich exchange of views on mission, ecclesiology, theology, evangelism and interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

We have enjoyed our encounter and mutual sharing. We sense that many matters of common concern are yet to be explored. We hope that soon there might be other opportunities to come back together, to challenge and share with each other of what it means to be partners in God's mission, in Taiwan, elsewhere in Asia, and around the world. We have learned from each other's experiences. We want to maintain our contacts and deepen our partnership.

The U.S. delegation was also deeply impressed by and grateful for the extensive participation during the consultation of representatives from the Roman Catholic Church in Taiwan, which is a full member within the NCCT. U.S. participants included a Maryknoll sister though the Roman Church is not a member of the NCCCUSA. We long for the day when that may be possible.

We recommend the following:

- personnel exchanges to help each other understand the real situations, breaking former myths about the "promised land" on one hand and a "mission field" on the other.
- regular mission visits and consultations for dialogue.
- encountering each other to remain faithful, on the front line, cutting edge, speaking out on critical issues of faith in Taiwan and in the USA and in the world.



GOOD SHEPHERD ENGLISH CONGREGATION

The English speaking congregation at Good Shepherd is constantly changing. Only a couple of members have been there for over four years. This brings joys and sorrows. New members arrive meeting friends and sharing in the life of G.S. as well as the Taipei expatriate community. There are many exciting things to do and places to see. But leaving and seeing others leave can be sad occasions, making some people careful about making new friends, realizing that such friendships may not last long. But often the friendships built here last for many years.

In December, Ed Belancio, an engineer who has been in Taipei over three years returned to the USA and will be greatly missed. Compton Tothill has been in Taiwan for well over twenty years and married a local woman, Janet. They and their daughter Vivienne will experience a great change when they return to Compton's native New Zealand. Compton, the English Warden for the last year, has made a very considerable contribution to Good Shepherd. His knowledge of Mandarin has enabled him to communicate well with the Chinese members, especially the Vestry, F & D Committee, Search Committee and the Building Committee. His drive, energy, wisdom, and other assets will be missed.

During this year, we have organized four music concerts using the talents of our own church members: pianists, a violinist, and singers. On two occasions, children from a local primary school have performed traditional Chinese instruments with remarkable abilities. Thanks to Doren.

Earlier in the year, under the leadership of Dr. Jim Monro, the English congregation held a very valuable "Mission and Vision" consultation. Although the formation of the "Mission Statement" was achieved, looking at our present situation, the "Vision Statement" challenged us to look ahead, taking into consideration anticipated changes in Taiwan over the next five years, including the government's trade, shipping and communication. Of course, the continual turnover of membership in the English congregation is a vital factor.

Although we have only a small English congregation, we manage to hold a number of activities for the members.

1. Fellowship Meetings are held every two weeks, led by Don Belton, have become a special feature with challenging and interesting topics for discussion.
2. Brunch once a month is very popular. Held at the homes of members, we enjoy friendship, relaxation (sometimes a swim), excellent pot-luck meals and the freedom to be away from the hustle and bustle of business life in Taipei.
3. Coffee Hour, after the 9:00am service on those other Sundays of the month gives another opportunity for people to come together for fellowship, companionship, a chat (or serious discussion) and relaxation with fellow Christians.

4. Bible Study. Because of the pace and style of life here, we find it best to hold Bible Study in a series of four or five weeks. However, two English language study groups meet, at which several Chinese people attend as well as 'foreigners'. These are not English language lessons.

5. Sunday School. Judy Belton has been leading the classes for children who come to church with parents. As a final activity, they will present a short 'item' of 'No Room at the Inn' during a December service.

6. Creche. When very young children are present, they are cared for by a number of adults on a rotation system organized by Paula Newbould.

7. Choir and Music. Three years ago, Good Sheperd's 9:00am service had only one (sometimes no) pianist. Now we have four very competent pianists who play on a rotation system. We are very fortunate to have such dedicated talent.

The Choir, too, has grown under the leadership of Bronwen Scott-Branagan who arranges for an anthem to be sung during the administration of holy communion. The choir also leads the singing of hymns and responses.

8. Lay Readers. Several experienced Lay Readers assist with the service each Sunday, leading the prayers, etc.

Most members of the congregation are involved in one way or another. In this way we demonstrate that the congregation is part of the 'priesthood of all believers'. All are able to minister to each other in some small way.



LIGHTHOUSE PRISON MINISTRIES

The Rev. Andrew Scott-Branagan

Recently, I received a phone call from Bishop Chien informing me that he had received a letter from Germany concerning a prisoner in one of the Taiwan prisons.

Having served his term in jail, this man was ready for release and must leave Taiwan immediately, but understandably he has no means for his fare back to Europe.

We were asked to see if there were some way of raising the funds to buy his ticket. My first thought was to contact Mr. Fred Voigtman, Founder of the Lighthouse Prison Ministries, for his advice.

This is not an unusual situation. Occasionally, friends, relatives, and governments are able to provide the necessary funds for such cases, but sometimes there appears to be no way of meeting the needs.

One of the services provided by the Lighthouse is to assist those in this situation. A number of people from various churches visit foreign prisoners on a regular basis, giving friendship and showing Christian concern for those people who have been imprisoned in a land where they have no friends or family, and where the guards do not speak their language. It is a very lonely and frightening experience.

Once a year, at Christmas, the prison authorities allow us to provide the prisoners with 'love gifts' which include basic items such as toiletries, reading matter, some simple clothing (underwear) and coffee, tea, cocoa, sweets, etc. Some of these items are donated and some have been bought.

We believe that this is an important ministry and definitely scripted. Jesus' reply to the question, "When did we see you sick or in prison and visited you?" was, "Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of those who are members of my family, you did it to me."



HELEN TUCKER COMPLETES A YEAR OF FAITHFUL SERVICE



In early July, Helen Tucker, an appointee of the CMS Overseas Experience Program, completed her year's term in Taiwan and returned to graduate studies in England. During her time at St. James', Taichung, she kept herself fully occupied as English teacher for several hundred kindergarten children, primary school students, parents and friends of St. James' and staff members. She also found time to serve as English secretary and Bible instructor. Her remaining moments were devoted to making friends with fellow teachers and exchanging language study with them.

Before Helen left England, her vicar arranged a commission service for her, including prayer and laying of hands. To calm her apprehensions at going so far from home, he assured her, "Don't worry - God has provided a Joseph to welcome you just as he did for the Israelites in Egypt". His prophecy came true. When in her new land she found herself surrounded and supported by friends, her fears melted away.

Helen's contributions went far beyond the call of duty. As only one of many examples, when she heard that three marriage services were to be held in churches around the diocese, she borrowed a violin and provided them lovely wedding music. For her kindness as well as for her artistry, the newlyweds will never forget her.

Everyone at St. James' wished that Helen could stay for at least another year. But she was already committed to a graduate program to prepare her for a career in teaching. She is now busily engaged in her training at Cambridge University. Helen and her predecessor, Clair Tilley, set a high standard for what ambassadors for Christ can do to bring church communities together from distant parts of the world. Although their time in Taiwan was not extensive, their contributions in Christ's name will long be remembered.

THE CRAIGHILLS RETURN TO TAIWAN



After seventeen years away in America, Mary and I are back in Taiwan! Retirement from my work on the Bihso's Staff of the Diocese of Pennsylvania made it possible for me to accept an invitation from the English language congregation of St. James' Church and the clergy of the Taiwan Episcopal Church to return.

Since nearly all the Episcopal clergy here are my former students and colleagues, the homecoming has been both relatively easy and also a tremendous joy. St. James' Church, where we are living, is located in Taichung, which, with a population of about a million, is the third largest city on the island. My primary responsibility is pastoring its English language congregation, consisting of a wonderful mixture of missionary families, students, academics, business people, Filipino contract workers, and Taiwanese who enjoy using English in church. But, I'm also back to teaching, working on diocesan projects and consulting with and supporting other churches. One amazing and gratifying discovery is that my spoken Chinese has come back well enough so that I can use it for teaching and preaching. Commuting is no problem, since we live in an apartment right on top of our church. On Sunday, I get to church by walking down one flight! The drawback is that we also live on top of a kindergarten with 340 kids - a fact which between 7:30 and 5:30 is hard to forget.

Coming back to Taiwan after seventeen years away makes Mary and me feel like Rip Van Winkle. Although underneath the sparkling new high rises and the jam-packed boulevards the old Taiwan remains, in several crucial respects, major changes have taken place. Austerity is being replaced by mind boggling affluence. I've never seen such a concentration of BMW's and Mercedes' - at twice the American price! A police state has been transformed into a highly competitive democracy, which has just completed a free-for-all election campaign and soon will hold another. An isolated society has been opened wide to the world. People who in the past hardly got around the island now vacation in the Alps. When they talk about the places they've visited, I feel positively provincial.

Although we miss friends and associations in America, we're sustained by our conviction of the importance of Christ's mission here. The gospel of secular progress holds great attraction for people in Taiwan, as it does throughout the world. But without the Gospel of Christ, its promises are at best shallow and ultimately self-destructive. The Church has much work to do, and I'm grateful for whatever chance I have to contribute to it. Keep us in your prayers. And may the joy of the New Year be with you.

THE CHURCH MISSION

This year's CCEA Province II Joint Retreat and Conference held in Taiwan was honored to have Canon David Prior as keynote speaker. Canon Prior, has the position of Public Preacher for the Diocese of London. He has served in a wide range of places including Africa, Latin America, and the U.S. His speaking sessions centered around the theme "A General Overview on the Marketplace in Scripture" and examined how St. Paul pursued his ministry in key Biblical cities. The sessions fit in well with the convocation theme "The Church Mission". Each session highlighted a different city as follows: Philippi - A Colonial Bastion; Thessalonica- A Commercial Crossroads; Athens - Complacent Democracy; Corinth - A Colorful Seaport; Ephesus - A Cultural Melting -Pot; and Jerusalem - A Credal Volcano.



GUESTS TO THE DIOCESE

THE MOST. REV. DESMOND TUTU, Archbishop of Cape Town and Metropolitan of the Church of the Province of Southern Africa, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, visited Taiwan on June 11-15, and met with church leaders. Archbishop Tutu was here at the invitation of the Taiwan Theological Seminary to give two talks in memory of the late Dr. Show Ki Huang.

THE REV. CANON PATRICK MAUNEY, Director of Anglican and Global Relations, Episcopal Church Center USA was in Taiwan Oct 28-Nov 3, for the consultation between NCCT and NCCCUSA. While here he met with members of the Standing Committee and preached at St. John's Cathedral.

THE REV. DR. MARNEY PATTERSON, Director and founder of Invitation to Live Ministries of Ontario, Canada was in Taiwan to lead a clergy conference on evangelism, and three seminars, one in the north, one in Taichung, and one in the south. One fifth of our diocesan members had been exposed to the subject of evangelism.

CANON DR. JOHN CHEW, Principal of Trinity Theological College in Singapore was in Taiwan in March to meet with scholars for an upcoming book "Dictionary of Asian Christianity", which is being edited by TTC.

THE RT. REV. WILLIAM SWING, his wife and five members of the Diocese of California visited Taiwan for the first time on Nov.4-7.

DR. PHILIP SHEN, Professor of Chinese, University of Hong Kong was invited to speak on "Hope in God in a Changing Asia" at the Asian Sunday Ecumenical Service on June 25.



The Unbreakable Bond

by Daniel Packet

I arrived in Taiwan just three months after graduating from college. I left my home of Philadelphia on August 25, 1994, with a lot of fears and expectations. I was going to a very far away land where I did not know anybody, except the name of my future boss, Reverend David Lai. I also did not know more than four words of the language or how I was going to teach English to a hundred and fifty Taiwanese kindergarten kids.

Fortunately for my psyche, my expectations far outweighed my apprehensions of living in a strange land. I came excited to learn almost every aspect of Taiwan and it's twenty-one million inhabitants. I wanted to know the history of Taiwan, along with her holiday rituals, her food, her arts, her language, and the everyday habits of her people. In short, I wanted the experience of forging a close bond with the culture of Taiwan.

It has been almost a year and a half since I boarded the plane from the "City of Brotherly Love" and I have not one regret about my decision to live and work in Taiwan. The initial fears I had quickly evaporated due in large part to the warmth and friendliness of the Taiwanese people, especially that of Reverend Lai and his wife, Lily.

My experience of living in Taiwan and studying the culture has more than fulfilled my aspirations and expectations. I have gained an immense amount of personal satisfaction from all that I have learned, the complicated history, the differences in their wedding, funeral, and holiday rituals, the appreciation of good tea and their delicious food, along with the close knit relationship of the Taiwanese family. I have also made strong inroads in learning Mandarin Chinese, and have also been blessed with the opportunity to travel to many of Taiwan's beautiful scenic places.

My life here in Taiwan is about more than just visiting tourist spots or gorging myself on tasty mooncakes. I am first and foremost an English teacher at the Grace Episcopal Church kindergarten in Tainan. It is a job that requires both physical and mental stamina along with a lot of patience in order to keep up with the lively energy of the children. And no matter how naughty they can be at times, I can honestly report that the children have played one of the largest roles in my happiness here in Taiwan. They are an extremely enthusiastic bunch that genuinely enjoys learning and participating in English songs and games. Their laughter and adorable smiles have kept me going, and will be sorely missed when I return to America.

Though my main priority is teaching children aged three to six, I also teach primary school students and adults of different levels. Progress with the kindergartners is obviously slow, since the main goal is on letting them have fun with English, but the teaching of the older students and adults is more serious. Seeing a student's steady improvement is a great source of pride for any teacher, and I am no exception. To hear the older kids and adults speak more and more English with each passing month is satisfaction that words cannot express.

Although living in Taiwan or any other foreign country is not for everyone, I believe it is an exciting journey that shares no equal for those with the desire and interest to experience a new and different culture. I feel that I have forged a very close relationship with Taiwan and her culture. It has been an untraceable experience that will live with me forever, and from it, a bond that will never die.

